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Photograph: Townsend Avenue 1940s

Boothbay Region Historical Society News

May 2021

Researching and preserving our history

It will not be forgotten

From Our Archives

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Pewter plate c.1700 brought by Fullerton family from Ireland

The Fullerton Homestead and Colonial Fort

Written in 1944 by Elizabeth Reed

Elizabeth Reed, born in the 1870s, and lived in what is now the Boothbay Region Historical Society until her death in the 1950s except when working away in Boston and New York. Barbara Rumsey

After living in Woolwich, Georgetown, and perhaps Pemaquid for a decade, William Fullerton, Sr. and family decided to purchase land in 1729 in the newly-organized Townsend (Boothbay) as laid out by Col. David Dunbar. The land purchased by Fullerton began at the very head of Boothbay Harbor at White's Cove, named for Moses White, and extended north to Boothbay Center. On the shore his land ran south to where Marson Brothers now have a grain and oil business [in 2021 the Chowder House]; then ran west just south of Hotel Fullerton [in 2021 the post office lot] to William Moore's line [in 2021, at Moore's Rock above West Street], then north along the big meadow and up to the Center. This was perhaps the most choice of the shore lots as there were a number of springs of fresh water along by a swamp.

Fullerton's Projects and Assets

Fullerton, with the help of his son, William Jr., immediately cut great logs from his heavy forests, dug a deep cellar, and soon reared a small log cabin over it. The cabin faced south on the western slope of a hill, and the deep spring west of the cabin he and

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reared, the crops of maize, potatoes, and cabbages were growing on the hillside east of the cabin. When fall came, they were all safely stored in the new cellar.

Just how much luggage the family had is unknown but it is known that William Fullerton had a sea chest and among other necessary articles in it were certain cooking utensils, as follows. First was an iron Dutch oven having an iron cover with a turned-up rim. When the kettle was hung on the crane over the fire, hot coals were placed on this cover, the rim holding the coals in place. Thus the venison cooked quickly with heat from below and above. Another article in the sea chest was the tin baker, large enough to contain a haunch of bear meat. Children turned the crank which turned the meat thus cooking it evenly all around. The third article was a tin utensil with a shelf on the inside. On this shelf in a pan was baked the milk-raised or salt-raised bread as there was no yeast then. Five generations of Fullertons baked the milk-raised bread for the Presbyterian- Congregational Church in Boothbay Harbor. Perhaps the last article in the sea chest was the tin horn lantern. I still own all these articles, together with the sea chest. [They are now lost].

For the next fifteen years, the Fullerton family was busy clearing the woods away from in front of the cabin, draining the swamps, and building a little stone bridge over the brook [maybe the Stepping Stones that people used up to the 1950s]. A lean-to had been built and the family had been enriched by the advent of a yoke of oxen, two cows, a pig, some fowl, and some farm tools. All these had been acquired at great expense and had strained the family purse, but they made life more livable and farm work less of a drudgery.

Indian Trouble and Stone Fort

Up to 1745, the Indians had not been very troublesome in the Townsend region, but King George's War had begun in 1744. Now the little settlement clustered around the harbor lived in a constant dread of a massacre, hearing of the bloody work in Sheepscot, Damariscotta, and Broad Bay. They could move over to Fort Frederick at Pemaquid; they frequently went there to hear Chaplain Dennis preach. But if they did so, they feared their cattle would be killed and their cabins burned.

In self-defense, Fullerton with the aid of his stalwart son and Beath relatives built a stone garrison on the western slope of his big hill a few rods from his salt water cove. A picket fence surrounded it; also fenced was a path leading down to the flats so that they could dig clams and fish for cunners at high water. This fort stood where Frank B. Greene's garage now stands on Oak Street [in 2021 roughly behind the Opera House

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large rocks and boulders were being lying about so easily under the oak trees there. These rocks were later used in building up the road bed there. [Asa Tupper told Barbara Rumsey that the road area there was called "Bob DeWolfe's Fortification" by those who knew the rocks had been part of a fortified stone house. DeWolfe was the road commissioner who built up the road and sidewalk with the rocks.]

British Press Gangs

After the Indians had killed some of the more distant settlers, the rest of the inhabitants fled to William Fullerton's stone house. The men organized themselves into a little military force and took turns as sentries day and night, guarding those going down to the shore for clams. As the warfare grew more violent, many fled westward to Boston where they had relatives. Suddenly a British man-of-war appeared in the harbor and press gangs seized and carried off all the young able-bodied men in the settlement, leaving only older men to guard their little fort. They had in vain appealed to the Massachusetts Bay government for help and protection such as had been granted to surrounding towns.

So the older men had to guard the little settlement. As feared, the Indians burned their cabins and killed their cattle. But when news of the peace of 1748 reached Townsend in 1749, the settlers ventured back to their lands and rebuilt their cabins.

For more articles by Barbara Rumsey about the Boothbay region check our website

www.boothbayhistorical.org/out-of-our-past

BRHS 2021 Speaker Series



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Mike Dekker presents

**“Shared Ground: An Exploration of 17th century
Indigenous and Euromerican Cultures through
Gardening”**

Join us for this exciting talk by Zoom!

To make a reservation please email us at brhszoom@gmail.com.

Due to Covid restrictions, this talk will be available only through Zoom.

Using only period tools and heirloom seed varieties, Mike Dekker established a garden reflective both Native and Euromerican agricultural practices in Maine during the colonial era. What can this garden teach us about the peoples residing in colonial New England? Both cultures raised corn, beans, and squash yet employed divergent agricultural methods. Their differences, as well as their similarities, reflect the world views of both cultures. As an ethnohistorical tool, the garden can answer important questions about the people who called Maine home during the colonial period.

Mike Dekker is an author, historian, and a living history interpreter of early American history and material culture. He presents educational programs for historical societies, museums, historic sites, schools, and the public. He is the author of *The French and Indian Wars In Maine*, about the tragic and largely forgotten story of the six wars which ravaged Maine between 1675 and 1760.

For more information on the complete Speaker Series check our website [here](#).

[Due to Covid restrictions, our first talk is available by Zoom only. We may be able to offer inhouse seating as well as Zoom as the season progresses. Check our website for updated status, and for more information about each talk.](#)

Boothbay Region Historical Society

Annual Meeting

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house and inform members about the meeting, the board of trustees has decided to hold a short, closed meeting again this year on Tuesday, May 18 at 4:30pm. We will review finances and vote on the new slate of trustees, as nominated below. Minutes of this meeting will be available upon request. Thank you for your patience.

Nominees for new three-year terms: Ruth Alley and Dana Wilson. Nominated for returning three-year terms: Charlie Bamberg, Judy Eastwood, Kay Wilder. Officers: Kay Wilder, president, Kathy Tibbetts, vice-president, Debbe Cotter, secretary, Sarah Giles, Treasurer.



Boothbay Harbor from Mt. Pisgah c. 1930s

Membership News

Thank you

for sending in your memberships renewals! The letters have been sent and already we are receiving your renewals. We are grateful to all of you for your support for BRHS through this difficult time.

Our May Hours

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FOR A LIMITED NUMBER OF VISITORS AND RESEARCHERS
Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Please call us at 207-633-0820 or email brhs@gwi.net for an appointment.

Let's celebrate our cultural heritage together

[Follow us on Facebook](#)
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Boothbay Region Historical Society
72 Oak Street
Post Office Box 272
Boothbay Harbor, Maine 04538
207.633.0820

*We're (normally) open year-round,
Thursday through Saturday, 10 am to 2 pm.*

Please check our website for COVID-19 restrictions.

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